

A reluctant hero and a gentleman's villain join forces when an even greater evil, devoid of morality, threatens all of existence. What happens when you and your enemy lay down your cross and join together to extricate a greater darkness?

I felt a tightness in my chest. I tried to breathe in and I felt my lungs were filled with grief disguised as pneumonia. I could feel a rageful heat in my sternum. How could what I was seeing be? I looked across to my arch-nemesis; at our Reichenbach Falls. We could continue to fight and fall at this appointed time. Or, we could work together and defeat this greater evil. But what is this evil?

Before my eyes, as I wiped blood and sweat off my body, I saw the most grotesque horror imaginable. The monstrosity set before my vision was bereft of any eldritch terror that Lovecraft could conceive of. I struggle to even transcript the absoluteness of this evil. It was if the very protons, electrons, and neutrons of our universe had been inverted, transfigured, or, perverted into something all of Creation would vomit at and blacklist from memory.

I snapped out of the shock of such evil and looked at who I thought was my mortal enemy, my Voldemort, my Vader, my Sauron, my Morgenstern... Time slowed and gave me time to ponder. Why did all of these so called villains become immoral? Voldemort was conceived of a love potion and thus, fell into the pattern of never being able to love. Darth Vader...Anakin Skywalker was betrayed by the very same people he was raised and conditioned to trust. Sauron fell to real evil, unable to accept that absolute power corrupts absolutely. Morgenstern being the German name for Morning Star, Lucifer is unable to let his Father; our Father, do His thing. It is the greatest tragedy of all existence; past, present, and what is yet to come to be.

Again, I had this opportunity to mull on this pattern: the devil you know is the devil you must be locked in eternal conflict with. We plead to God to take our cup of suffering and forget to remove it from our possession. It becomes the devil I know... the devil he knows...the devil she knows...the devil you know. We are cognitively conditioned by a greater evil to go after whatever it presents to us.

The Wizard of Oz commanded, "Pay no attention to what is behind the curtain."

It's not always some big grand conspiracy that evil monsters are set out to control the masses. At least, our individual pride commands that we not even consider that demonic lizard people, in lieu of the late-night History Channel, may have made slaves of us. Most of the time, we face our own deep state, our own Freemasons, our own Illuminati; it is an internal struggle that I think we might just be able to extricate from the human experience.

Then, I realized all of this in a matter of neurons zipping and zapping across my mind. Maybe...maybe just maybe my arch-nemesis has been lied to, twisted up, and plainly, fucked with. I then understood, what we are told to hate is not always correct. It simply is. All I know in this moment is this: I can hold onto this old pattern or I can grow a fucking pair of balls and lay down my cross of grief and Sherlock can

finally work with Morioarty. We locked eyes and in a miracle of cosmic proportions, understood each other. ‘

In front of our vision, people clad in blood stained clothes, held a limp child above an altar. A statue of an evil spirit with a synonymous head of a goat began to move. All the while the two of us had come to a silent understanding, these things, that lost their humanity, sodomized a child and holding it up to this statue come to life, sacrificed the child’s soul. I watched the child’s soul be torn from her earthly body. Angels cried out in grief and righteous conviction. I looked at my brother, our anger was no longer directed at one another. We knew what we had to do. We had to win, even if that meant giving our lives up.

Directly below us, with our location unknown to our enemy, children, were holding each other crying out for their mommies and daddies. These inhuman people had taken these childrens’ clothes and threw them into a fire at the base of this statue. I cannot author the atrocities I have witnessed without a bucket within reach for I become nauseous at the very memories.

A booming voice shook the cavern, “The verdict has been rendered. Your time is over and past. Judgement has been dispatched. Your perversion of My Creation is done. I have taken the sins on so that My Children may be free of it and you have forsaken that. You have forsaken My love; you have turned from My grace and now my angels have surrounded my sons and daughters. Look upon your judgement.”

An angel appeared in front of us each of us and in their right hands were a shield covered in the Word. It glowed with conviction to cover us from the Enemy’s accusations; it’s attacks. In their left hands were swords that gave off a fire only akin to the birth of a new star. We were handed these and they turned to the abomination below. The all-encompassing voice bellowed again, “Now, carry out the verdict.”

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I have a dream of being a great leader. But sometimes I fear I am the greatest pretender, unable to lay down my cross of grief and pride. Wide is the entrance and broad is the way that leads to destruction and robs you of days. Narrow is the gate and its hard is the road to endure on the way to eternal life.

How do we reignite hope? How do we teach people to dream again? If I can dream, so can anyone. I have redeemed my soul and flown amongst angels. I’ve seen such perfect splendor that cannot be defined. It is time to leave the people who tell us to stay in our own little lanes. A new day is on the horizon. I have been beaten down, destroyed, and downtrodden. I made the choice to leave that behind. Yet, it persists in its mission to divide my very existence; who I am.

At one point or another in our lives, we all walk out and into our own valleys. The very shadow of fear strikes at us to try and make us abandon rod and staff. Right now, sometimes this enemy wins. Sometimes this entity succeeds. It is rarely head turning, vomit inducing, exorcist requiring hullabaloo. When it happens, its

quiet. It slithers its way into your life. You don't even notice the change until you look in the mirror and you don't recognize the person you've become...or, the pale imitation of humanity you are struggling to keep up.

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I want to do something about the evil in my country. But what's the point if history just repeats itself? Why should we care about any of the atrocities in the world if history is just going to repeat itself? Can we end the asinine cycle of horseshit that is the idea that history repeats itself? Is that just another pattern that be thrown into the dustbin of history? We don't need to forget but maybe we can just fucking move on to a better life for future generations. We need not divide ourselves because we are all imperfect and to pretend that one side is evil and the other side is good is not reality.

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The mentality of "Don't ask, don't tell," migrated to ignoring evil when it's right in your face. It's cowardice and I'm done with being a fool and a coward. When a sick man dressed in drag philates himself in front of children, people rather pretend it doesn't exist; even if it's their own children.

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When I first saw Michael Bay's Transformers in 2007, I was captured. I had grown up collecting them before then and watching all the serialized television shows. The characters had morals and acted not for the sake of violence but because if they turned to chaos and cowardice, the outcome would be much, much worse. Then I saw the first live action movie and was overcome by the weight of one specific line.

Shia LaBeouf's character, Sam Witwicky, says this line after a big action scene in a junkyard between his new 'car' and a scary cop car, "Fifty years from now, when you're looking back at your life, don't you want to be able to say you had the guts to get in the car?" If the protagonist, Sam, didn't say this to the love interest, there would be no movie. If he hadn't taken a risk, so many would have died. I guess it's a good thing I fixated (due to ASD/ADHD/Autism) on that line because it would prove very useful about a year later.

In the summer of 2008, there was a yearly Transformers convention and it was officially sponsored by the company that still owns Transformers; Hasbro. It was called BotCon (and as of 2022, it has come back after a hiatus.) I begged my mother to take me. I did not care about my disability. It was the first time in my life that I chose to become Master over my disability. She told me that there was no backing out. It was my first experience of having skin in the game. I had faith.

Lo and behold, I was amazed when we arrived. It was amazing. Instead of going on about all the amazing booths, artists, displays, I want to talk to you about a contest with a cash prize. It was for children and we just stumbled upon it. A woman working at the convention was asking parents and children if they wanted to enter a contest with first place getting a \$1,000 gift card to Hasbro's, now defunct,

online shop. I said yes as soon as the word popped into my mind. My family had one stipulation: no backing out; no quitting. I agreed.

I went through all the brackets and I made it to the last contest and learned that it would be held either later that day or the next; I need to find out for sure. Well, the final one was being held on a stage and a handful of other children were competing. The challenge was to take a never-before-scene mold of a figure and 'convert' it from its robot mode to its alternate (vehicle) mode. I felt the fear of sensory meltdown come over me. I remember taking one step on the small staircase up to the stage and freezing.

I turned to my mother and she grabbed me vigorously and told me to get my ass up on that stage. I remember shaking my head *no*. I was scared. Now, I realize I was afraid of losing; of letting my family down. Then, when all the other parents surrounding us were near-yelling at my mother, she quoted the same line from the live action movie I mentioned earlier, "Fifty years from now, when you're looking back at your life, don't you want to be able to say you had the guts to get in the car?"

Now, she paraphrased it but, like most call-to-actions, quoting verbatim isn't required. It hit the spot. It shocked me out of my autistic inspired stupor and made me realize how much I would regret it if I gave up. I am anything but a quitter. I win because I must. That one sentence made me get back up on that stage, and win not first place but second place and a \$500 gift card to Hasbro's online store. I brought the entire first wave of tie-in-toys from a new cartoon that aired that year; Transformers Animated.

Later that summer, my family was in Beijing, China and my order decided to show up when I was half-way around the world. In April, 2008, I conquered my disability for the first time in my life. Then, a couple of months later, a little autistic, eight-year-old climbed the Great Wall of China. The lesson is this: when your own version of a sentient, extraterrestrial, robot shows up at your front door and asks you to get in; get in the fucking car. You never know the adventures you will have and the people you will reach.